

You Really Need to Look Inside

W211 Additional User

John Lyding (LM#116)

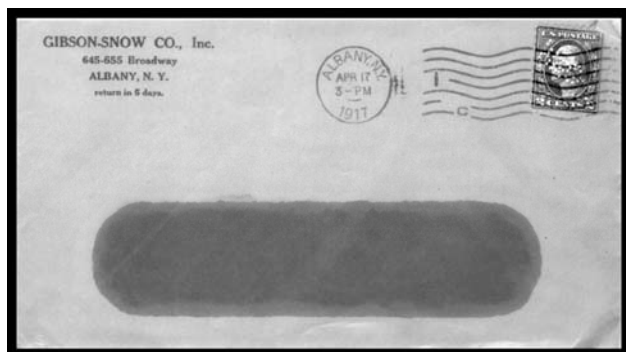


Figure 1
Gibson-Snow Co., Inc. cover
(Reduced to 50% of actual size)

Even though I purchased the cover illustrated in Figure 1 above several years ago, I distinctly remember setting it aside at the dealer's table in the hopes that something better would turn up in the boxes that I was rummaging through. Secondly, this cover was sort of beat up and it was one of those greasy window envelopes. But, as luck would have it, nothing better turned up. So, it went home with me and eventually wound up in one of the "when I get to it boxes".

Well now, at least five years later I got around to that box and down to Gibson-Snow. At first glance, I noted a "G" in a diagonal punch on the stamp and turned to the G section of *The Catalog of United States Perfins*. No diagonal "GS" or "G&S" listed. In order to get some light on the back of the perfin, I opened the envelope and for the first time noted its contents which I dumped on the desk.

With the light shining through the perfins holes, closer examination revealed that the pattern is "W&G" diagonal (see Figure 2). Initially, I thought it is pattern **W212** (see Figure 3), an unidentified B+ rate that is also lacking from my collection. However, closer inspection reveals it is pattern **W211** (see Figure 4), a straight "W&G" that is punched diagonally down the stamp. In other words the stamp (or sheet of stamps) was laid diagonally in the perforator. The user for pattern **W211**, a C+ rate, has been positively identified as Walker & Gibson, Albany, NY.

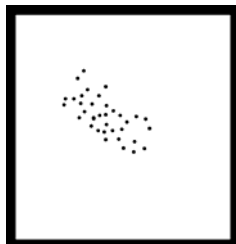


Figure 2
Perfin electronically
"lifted" from cover.
(Note missing hole)

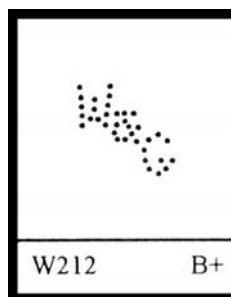


Figure 3
Pattern W212

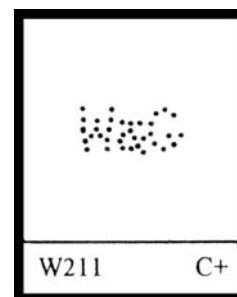


Figure 4
Pattern W211

Based on the cover's corner card, Gibson-Snow Co., Inc. is an alternate, supplemental user of pattern **W211**? Is there any connection between Gibson-Snow Co., Inc. and Walker & Gibson? Next I

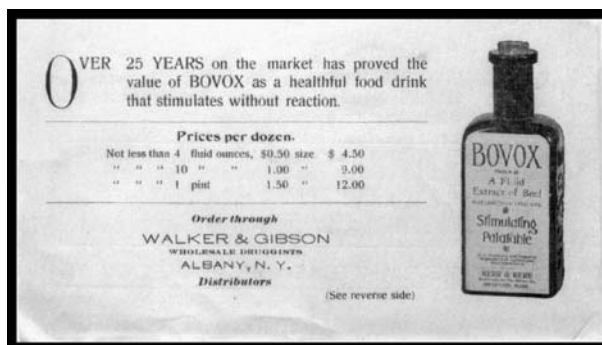


Figure 5
BOVOX Advertisement
(Reduced to 50% of actual size)

picked up the BOVOX advertisement that was inside the envelope (see Figure 5). The clue is on the bottom "Order through WALKER & GIBSON". This statement is reinforced by Figure 6 where the billhead's Walker & Gibson has the subtitle, "Gibson-Snow Co., Inc. Proprietors" and also lists Albany NY as the company's location in 1916.

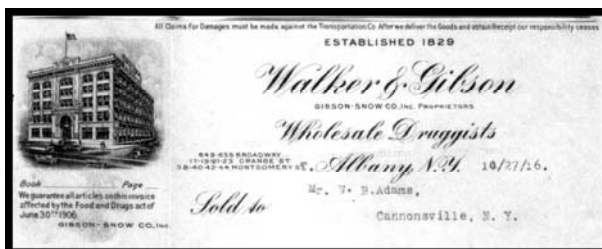


Figure 6
Walker & Gibson Billhead
(Reduced to 40% of actual size.)

(Continued on next page.)

You Really Need to Look Inside (cont.)

A search of the Internet¹ confirms the information on the previous page. In 1917 (the postmark date of the cover) Mr. Charles Gibson was the sole owner of Gibson-Snow Co., Inc., Albany, NY. Gibson had started working as an office boy for the original company, A. McClure & Company, in 1870 and rapidly advanced to membership in the firm in 1883. In 1892 the firm was renamed Walker & Gibson with Gibson's lifelong associate, Mr. W. J. Walker, as his partner. Upon Walker's death in 1904, Gibson became the sole owner of the firm. It continued operation under Walker & Gibson until 1917 when the business was incorporated under the firm name of Gibson-Snow Company, Inc.

Under Gibson's leadership the business rapidly grew with branches in several New York cities; all handling drugs, druggists' supplies, chemicals, and essential oils. In 1927 it employed 500 people and

did business over an area of 75,000 square miles.

Copies of this information have been forwarded to the new U.S. Catalog Editor, Steve Endicott. Steve agrees with the above analysis and will list Gibson-Snow Co., Inc., Albany, NY as an alternate user for pattern **W211** in the next Additions & Corrections to the U.S. Perfins Catalog.

So, in the end, I still do not have a copy of pattern **W212** in my collection and the user for that pattern remains unknown. However, I did find a new alternate user for pattern **W211** and was reminded that "You Really **Do** Need to Look Inside"!

References:

1. Young, Holice B.; "The History of New York State", Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1927; www.usgennet.org/usa/ny/his/bio/pt9.html.